

## Public Health

Seattle & King County

Immunization Program  
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**Return Service Requested**

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### Vaccinate Your Patients Against Influenza!

Influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older, so please continue to vaccinate your patients. If you don't provide influenza vaccination in your clinic, please recommend vaccination to your patients and refer them to their local pharmacy. Several online programs are available to locate sites near a patient's workplace or home that offer influenza vaccination services, including the "HealthMap Vaccine Finder" (<http://flushot.healthmap.org/?address=>).

Many resources related to influenza disease and vaccination are available for healthcare professionals and the public, including:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Seasonal Flu web section for health care professionals, with information about vaccination and clinical diagnosis, testing, and surveillance: [www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm)
- National Influenza Vaccine Summit website, dedicated to addressing and resolving influenza and influenza vaccine issues: [www.preventinfluenza.org/](http://www.preventinfluenza.org/)
- Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)'s Influenza web section with information and handouts for health care professionals and patients: [www.immunize.org/influenza/](http://www.immunize.org/influenza/)

Influenza continues to be detected at low levels in King County, with initial positive specimens from outpatient surveillance identified as influenza A(H3). The proportion of emergency department visits attributed to influenza-like illness increased among children ages 2 through 17 years, and also slightly among adults age 18 through 44 years. For a weekly update of influenza status in King County, visit [www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/immunization/fluactivity.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/immunization/fluactivity.aspx).

Six manufacturers are producing influenza vaccines for the U.S. market for the 2012–13 season. You can find a helpful chart, "Influenza Vaccine Products for the 2012–

2013 Influenza Season, which summarizes the vaccine products and age groups for which they are licensed, online at [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4072.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4072.pdf).

Here are a few points to remember, excerpted from "Ask the Experts" at [www.immunize.org/askexperts](http://www.immunize.org/askexperts):

- Fluzone is the only inactivated influenza vaccine licensed for use in children younger than age 3 years. It is available in single 0.25ml and 0.5ml -dose pre-filled syringes that are preservative free, and in multi-dose vials that contain a small amount of thimerosal to prevent bacterial growth in the vials.

**NOTE:** Although thimerosal-containing vaccines are safe to use in children, and no scientific evidence indicates that thimerosal in vaccines causes adverse events unless the patient has a severe allergy to thimerosal, **Washington state law prohibits use of thimerosal containing vaccines in children under the age of 3 years and in pregnant women.** An exception to the law has been made for this flu season if the child or pregnant woman has an allergy to latex.

- CDC stresses that vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting against influenza, but has no preference between the high-dose influenza vaccine and the standard-dose influenza vaccine for patients who are age 65 years and older.

### Updated Resource for Pneumococcal Vaccination of Children and Teens

IAC recently revised the health professional resource "Recommendations for Pneumococcal Vaccine Use in Children and Teens." The updated version includes revised information about revaccination with pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV), minor wording changes, and a revised title (from "Recommendations for Pneumococcal Vaccine Use in Children.") You can download a copy of this resource at [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2016.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2016.pdf).

### King County Pertussis Update

Pertussis activity in King County is decreasing towards baseline levels. The total numbers of pertussis cases reported to-date this year are: 725 confirmed, 20 probable, and 103 suspect; 13 cases have been hospitalized and none have died. This compares to a total of 98 confirmed cases, 4 hospitalizations and 0 deaths in 2011. For more details about the weekly surveillance summary, visit [www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/~media/health/publichealth/documents/communicable/Pertussis/PertussisSummaryWeek46.ashx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/~media/health/publichealth/documents/communicable/Pertussis/PertussisSummaryWeek46.ashx).

Visit our *VacScene* newsletter webpage at [www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/vacscene.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/vacscene.aspx) to find current and back issues of the *VacScene* newsletter and to sign up to be notified by e-mail when new information is posted to the webpage.



# Vaccines For Children

## Program News and Alerts

### Storm Warning! Do you have a Power Outage Plan?

Winter weather is on its way, making this a good time to review your clinic's emergency vaccine management plan. Power outages and natural disasters can expose vaccines to out-of-range temperatures. Each VFC Program provider office **MUST** have an emergency/disaster plan in place that will keep vaccine safe and stored at the recommended temperatures in the event of an extended power outage. An emergency vaccine storage plan template is available on PHSKC's VFC website: [www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/immunization/vfc.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/immunization/vfc.aspx)

#### **If you have access to your clinic's vaccine supply and the power is out:**

- Follow your emergency vaccine storage plan, if safe and feasible, and transfer vaccine to your back-up location.

#### **If it is not possible to "activate" your emergency plan:**

- Monitor refrigerator and freezer temperatures. Try not to open the refrigerator/freezer any more than is absolutely necessary. Under normal circumstances, each compartment of the refrigerator should be able to maintain in-range temperatures for up to 3-4 hours.
- If MMR is stored in the refrigerator, move it to the freezer immediately. Freezer storage is safe for MMR and is, in fact, preferred.
- If/when refrigerator temperature exceeds 46F, here are a few options:
  - Follow your emergency vaccine storage plan and transfer vaccine to the back-up location (if that location has power) **OR**
  - Pack refrigerated vaccines in a Styrofoam cooler with a thermometer, a layer of insulation, and cold (not frozen) packs, **OR**
  - Take vaccines from the top shelf and move them to a lower shelf; remove a few icepacks from the freezer and place them on the top shelf of the refrigerator. The thermometer sensor should be in the center of the second shelf. Close the door and monitor temperature closely--do not expose refrigerated vaccines to temperatures below 35F! **OR**
  - Remember to move refrigerated vaccines out of the freezer once the power is restored.
- Keep track of the number of hours and highest temperature reached for any vaccines not stored as recommended. Prepare a list of vaccines exposed to out-of-range temperatures, with lot numbers and expiration dates. This information will be necessary to evaluate vaccine viability. **CHECK WITH PUBLIC HEALTH** before making decisions about vaccine storage safety. **Always report storage incidents to the VFC Program at 206-296-4774.**

### FluMist Replacement Program

MedImmune is contracting with McKesson to replace unused, expiring doses of FluMist at no cost. This program is for state-supplied FluMist only. To be eligible for replacement doses, your unused doses of FluMist must expire on or before January 31, 2013. Providers have from 15 days prior to the expiration date to request replacement doses. FluMist orders placed in August and early September are due to expire on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Take advantage of this program to replace any unused doses that are soon to expire. For more information about the replacement program, visit: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/downloads/med-fm-rf-instruct.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/downloads/med-fm-rf-instruct.pdf).

### Did You Know....About Varicella Immunity and Zoster Vaccine?

- If a patient has received 2 doses of varicella vaccine, CDC does not currently recommend zoster vaccine when the patient reaches age 60. However, you do not need to inquire about varicella vaccination history before administering zoster vaccine because virtually all people currently or soon to be in the recommended age group have not received varicella vaccine. For details, see page 19 of the CDC recommendations *Prevention of Herpes Zoster* ([www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5705.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5705.pdf)).
- Receipt of zoster vaccine is not proof of prior varicella disease. According to CDC, acceptable evidence of varicella immunity in healthcare personnel includes (1) documentation of 2 doses of varicella vaccine given at least 28 days apart, (2) history of varicella or herpes zoster based on physician diagnosis, (3) laboratory evidence of immunity, or (4) laboratory confirmation of disease. If a healthcare employee has already received a dose of zoster vaccine but has no evidence of immunity to varicella, the zoster dose can be considered the first dose of the 2-dose varicella series.

### Updated Immunization Resources from the Vaccine Education Center

The Vaccine Education Center (VEC) at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia recently updated three fact sheets, one on various facts about childhood vaccines, another on aluminum in vaccines, and another on vaccine ingredients.

VEC also released a new fact sheet for parents on the recommended immunization schedule and created a "cling" (printed on special paper so it can cling to surfaces such as walls and refrigerators without the use of adhesives), titled "Don't let your baby sail on uncharted waters...STAY ON COURSE!" This fact sheet pictures the immunization schedule for babies age 0-23 months. Spanish-language versions of the fact sheets on the immunization schedule and aluminum in vaccines are available, as is a Spanish-language version of the cling.

You can find these materials on VEC's updated web page at <http://vaccine.chop.edu/schedule>. Fact sheets are available online for downloading or can be [ordered](#) for \$4 per 50-sheet tear pad, plus shipping. Clings are available in multiples of five for \$5, plus shipping. Discounts are available for orders of 50 clings and more.

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**The VacScene**  
Immunization News & Information

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